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13 May 1982

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

THROUGH : Deputy Director of Central Intelligence
Executive Director
Executive SecretaryFROM : J. Kenneth McDonald
Chief, History StaffSUBJECT : Comments on Memorandum of 26 April 1982 from Chairman,
Information Review Committee, to Director of Central
Intelligence, Subject: "Protection of Classified
Information in CIA Histories from FOIA Release"

1. I have no objection to the Information Review Committee's recommendation at the conclusion of their 26 April 1982 memorandum to you. The CIA History Program, as currently constituted and approved by the Executive Committee, focuses primarily on DCI histories and a general history of the Agency. We intend to use the monograph format--the one best suited to deal with broad topics such as CIA's relations with Congress, the Agency's place in the Intelligence Community, etc.--only on occasion, to serve a specifically defined purpose. Since we do not wish to undertake any historical studies that are not clearly and directly useful to the Agency's mission and management, we shall be glad to submit any proposed monograph topics for approval by the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence.

2. I must add, however, that I cannot agree with what I understand to be the Information Review Committee's view that Agency histories, especially monographic studies, are somehow more vulnerable to FOIA requests, and more difficult to defend against such requests, than are other Agency documents. I do not believe that this is true either in principle or in practice.

3. In principle, the requirements of the FOI Act apply to histories in exactly the same way they apply to all other internal Agency documents, and the same need to weigh their usefulness to the Agency against the risks of FOIA review prevails.

4. In practice, of the over 15,000 FOIA requests received by the Agency since the Information Privacy Division first opened for business in 1975.

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